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## PSYCHOLOGY.

**The Devices of Criminals in India.**—The writer of a series of articles in the *Times of India* on “By-paths of Crime in India,” mentions some devices of habitual criminals in that country. One curiosity which he was shown on a visit to the Presidency gaol in Calcutta was a heavy lead bullet about three-quarters of an inch in diameter. This was found on an habitual thief, and was being used to form a pouch or bag in the throat for secreting money, jewels, etc., in the event of his being searched. The ball is put into the mouth and is allowed to slide down gently until it reaches some part near the epiglottis, where it is held in position, and is kept there for about half an hour at a time. This operation is repeated many times daily, and gradually a sort of pocket is formed, the time being longer or shorter according to the size of pocket required. In some cases six months have been sufficient, in others a year, while in some cases two years are necessary. Such a pouch as this last is capable of holding ten rupees—about the size of ten florins. The thief therefore can undergo search, and, nothing being found, he goes away with the spoil in his throat, the power of breathing and speech being in no way interfered with. About a score of prisoners in the Calcutta gaol have such pouch formations. In the hospital of the prison the visitor learned some of the malingering practices of Indian criminals. In one case he saw a youth who was a perfect skeleton, with lustrous eyes looking out in a ghastly manner from a worn, haggard face. It was discovered that he had for two years been taking an irritant poison, with a view to produce diarrhoea, in order to shirk work and get pleasant quarters in the hospital. But he had overdone the part, for he had reduced himself to such a condition that recovery was all but impossible. This taking of internal irritants is a common practice amongst the habitual criminals of Calcutta. Castor oil seed, croton seed, and two other seeds, which have no English name, are the agents most commonly employed. One man was pointed out who, in order to get off his fetters, had produced an ulcer by rubbing the chafed skin with caustic lime, and then irritating the sore by scratching it with a piece of broken bottle. The segregation of lepers has long been the practice in Indian prisons, and it is mentioned as an example of the increase of leprosy in India that the disease occurs with much greater frequency amongst the criminals of Bengal than it did ten years ago.

**The Home Instinct in Toads.**—I originally introduced a few toads into the cellar of my house to destroy slugs, and in a few years they became more of a nuisance than the slugs had been. I had the tenants (my father-in-law and family) to send a lot of them, probably a hundred, over to my greenhouses, all of which were on a level with the ground. The toads came one-half in a tin slop bucket, and the other in a market basket,—both covered. The first day they were to be seen almost everywhere, but restless and excited. Next day very few were to be seen. On the third day none could be found, but on *that* day a large number were seen by several members of the family at the only opening into the cellar,—the cold air flue. None were seen again at the greenhouses (except a few that could not jump the three steps to the surface.) I firmly believe they found their way back, but of course cannot be positive. No toads, except perhaps a single one at a time, had ever before been seen in that yard, and their appearance there in such quantity, in a reasonable time after the disappearance at another place in similar quantity, to my mind is pretty clear. The bee-line distance is about a third of a mile, with two races and the creek between. We have proof of similar home instinct in the cat, carrier pigeon, four-week-old pig, land tortoise, and almost every bird ; why not in the toad ? I have had the same little owl return to my conductor spout for twenty-five years.—EDWARD TATNALL.

*Wilmington, Delaware.*

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## PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

**Natural Science Association of Staten Island.**—New Brighton, April 11th, 1889.—Meeting called to order at 8.30 o'clock. Dr. N. L. Britton called attention to several specimens of silicified fossils found by Mr. Arthur Hollick in the white Cretaceous gravel on the side of a brook near Prince's Bay. They consisted of a brachiopod mollusk, allied to *Pentamerus*, a cyathophylloid coral, perhaps *Zaphrentis*, and a third one, probably a sponge. Dr. Britton remarked as follows : This is one of the most interesting discoveries recently made in our local geology, and is of much more than local importance, inasmuch as it affords valuable evidence towards establishing the origin of the formation known as the Yellow Gravel or Pre-glacial Drift, which has been frequently alluded to in our "Proceedings." I have been especially interested in this latter formation for several years, as it has been a much debated question whence came the yellow gravel, and